

where there is smoke, there is fire. Mr. Speaker, I am here to tell you that there is a fire threatening our Republic.

Mr. Speaker, make no mistake about it: Russia attacked our country when it tried to meddle in our elections. But we have a Commander in Chief who will barely acknowledge this act, much less condemn it.

Mr. Speaker, we hear tough talk from the President when it comes to Iran, North Korea, and China; but when Russia moves missiles in violation of treaty obligations, when a Russian spy ship patrols just outside our coastal waters, we hear crickets. As evidence mounts that Russia is interfering with the democracies of Europe, we hear crickets. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, this President sees no moral difference between our democracy and the Putin regime.

Mr. Speaker, there is smoke; there is fire. Our Republic is being threatened. We are the first responders, and we can only put this fire out with the truth. We need to establish an independent commission to investigate the Trump-Russian ties and find our way to the truth.

#### COMMEMORATING 20 YEARS OF THE GLUCK FELLOWS PROGRAMS OF THE ARTS

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate 20 years of the Gluck Fellows Program of the Arts at the University of California, Riverside.

Since 1996, the Max H. Gluck Foundation has supported undergraduate and graduate students as they bring innovative arts programming to schools, libraries, and community centers in my district.

The Gluck Fellows Program of the Arts has provided students, families, and other community members with the opportunity to experience art, music, dance, theater, and art history through workshops and performances. Over the past 20 years, more than 300,000 Inland Empire residents have benefited from this program.

I congratulate UCR's Chancellor Kim Wilcox; Dean of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Milagros Pena; Gluck Fellows Director Erika Suderburg; and especially the Max H. Gluck Foundation and its chair, Dr. Jon Kaswick.

I wish continued success to the Gluck Fellows Program of the Arts at the University of California, Riverside.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, March 29, 2017.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,  
*The Speaker, House of Representatives,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on March 29, 2017, at 9:28 a.m.:

Appointments:  
Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress.

With best wishes, I am,  
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1431, EPA SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD REFORM ACT OF 2017

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 233 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

#### H. RES. 233

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 1431) to amend the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act of 1978 to provide for Scientific Advisory Board member qualifications, public participation, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and on any amendment thereto to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Mr. NEWHOUSE. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, the House Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 233, providing for consideration of H.R. 1431, the EPA Science Advisory Board Reform Act of 2017. This legislation will reform the Environmental Protection Agency, or the EPA, Science Advisory Board to ensure that it is unbiased and transparent in performing its duties.

The SAB, the Science Advisory Board, was first established by Congress in 1978 and plays a vital role in reviewing the scientific foundation of EPA's regulatory decisions, while also providing critical advice to us here in Congress as well as the Agency. The information it reviews is used to justify important policy decisions at the EPA and should be held to the highest standards because it is imperative that the regulated community and the public can have confidence that EPA decisions are grounded, that science should be both reproducible and transparent.

However, shortcomings with the current process have arisen in recent years, including limited public participation, EPA interference with expert advice, potential conflicts of interest, and serious deficiencies with the process to select the board members. Far too often, the SAB's authority has been used by the EPA to silence dissenting scientific views and opinions, rather than promoting the impartiality and fairness that is the cornerstone of unbiased scientific advice.

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At its inception, the SAB was intended to function independently in order to provide candid advice and guidance to the EPA. Yet, if the Agency undermines this autonomy, then the SAB's value to both the EPA and Congress, I believe, is severely diminished.

Mr. Speaker, to address these issues, H.R. 1431 would reform the SAB and reaffirm its independence so the public and regulated entities can have that confidence that sound science is driving policy decisions at the EPA.

The bill makes several important reforms to the SAB, such as requiring board members to be qualified experts; disclosing conflicts of interest and sources of bias; and ensuring that the views of members, including the dissenting members, are available to the public. It provides the public with the opportunity to participate in the advisory activities of the board and gives people the ability to view the agency's responses to issues raised by the SAB.

Additionally, the bill requires that at least 10 percent of the board is comprised of State, local, and tribal experts; that board members do not participate in advisory activities that involve reviews or evaluations of their own work; and that EPA publicly disclose all board member recusals; and that comments are published in the Federal Register.

So these reforms will improve the existing regulatory process, while also reinvigorating the scientific judgements that are often directly linked to regulatory decisions.

The EPA relies on SAB reviews and studies to support new regulations, new standards, assessments, and other Agency actions. A transparent and accountable Science Advisory Board is critically important and can assure the public that the data that Federal agencies rely on is scientifically sound and unbiased.